



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: October 25, 2005

Media Contact: Joe DiLaura 317/232-3396

Career and Technical Education Visits, Forums To Help State Determine Effectiveness of Programs, Identify Best Practices.

Senior state officials with responsibility over the state's vocational and technical education system are meeting this week with students, educators, administrators, and employers to hear what's on the minds of participants in the state's Career and Technical Education system.

The first of three regional meetings scheduled throughout Indiana took place today (Tuesday, October 25, 2005) in Indianapolis. Department of Workforce Development Commissioner Ron Stiver, Andrew Penca, Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Research and Development, and other officials from DWD visited classes and talked with students at Arlington High School (Indianapolis Public Schools) Warren Central High School and the Walker Career Center (MSD of Warren Township) and the McKenzie Career Center (MSD Lawrence Township) to learn more about what's working in the field.

In addition to the site visits to meet with students, teachers, and administrators, the officials hosted a forum with parents, school administrators, business officials, and other consumers of the state's vocational education system at the McKenzie Career Center in Lawrence Township.

"We are holding these meetings to help us in our efforts to better align the skills being delivered to our emerging workers with the needs of the state's employers," said Stiver. "We want to ensure that the graduates of today's vocational and technical education programs have the right skills needed in today's workforce."

Stiver noted his Department's is seeking information on vocational education and other training efforts to help in administering the state's new \$23 million Strategic Skills Initiative. Announced earlier this year, the Skills Initiative seeks to identify and alleviate shortages projected to exist in critical occupations through development of a lasting, demand-driven approach to workforce development.

"How the state and nation structure and deliver vocational and technical education and workforce development programs is and will continue to evolve," he said. "As a result, we must be well attuned to what's working in the field, and where we can strategically move our delivery system in an efficient and effective manner."

In addition to today's meetings, similar sessions are planned for Thursday and Friday in northern and southern Indiana.

Participants at today's forum were:

Jason Zielke, Rose Hulman Ventures and Mentoring Engineer for Robotics Team.

Barb Dahlstrom, Clarian Health Partners, a Robotics Sponsor and parent of former student.

Janet Banks, COO of JIST publishing.

Kathleen Gilmore and Tom Ebbinghaus, BellTech.logix, a partner of the program's IT component.

Matt Fleck, former Lawrence North Guidance Counselor, now an official with the Department of Education.

Jeff Martin, Civil Engineering/Bio-Tech Instructor at McKenzie Career Center, and owner of an engineering firm.

Frank Svarczkopf, IT Instructor and Robotics Coach.

Leslie Gardner, IUPUI Instructor and Dow Elanco official on sabbatical.

Lisa Gausman, Algebra II Teacher/Staff Leader on themed learning and academies at Mckenzie.

Dr. Walter Bourke, Director of Secondary Curriculum in Lawrence Township.

Bob Grimmett, Member of Collision Repair Advisory Board and member of Lawrence Township Chamber of Commerce.

Sue Kemmerer, Assistant Director at McKenzie.

Lou Ann Schwenn, Director of Walker Career Center.

Hank Dragoo, Parent and Member of PL 221 committee.

Daphene Cyr Koch, IUPUI Professor of Construction Management.

Michelle Zimmerman, Principal at LM Henderson & Co./President of the Central Indiana Regional Academy of Finance Board.

Matt Will, Professor of Finance at University of Indianapolis.

-30-